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(54) ANCHORING MEMBER WITH SAFETY RING

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(57) ABSTRACT

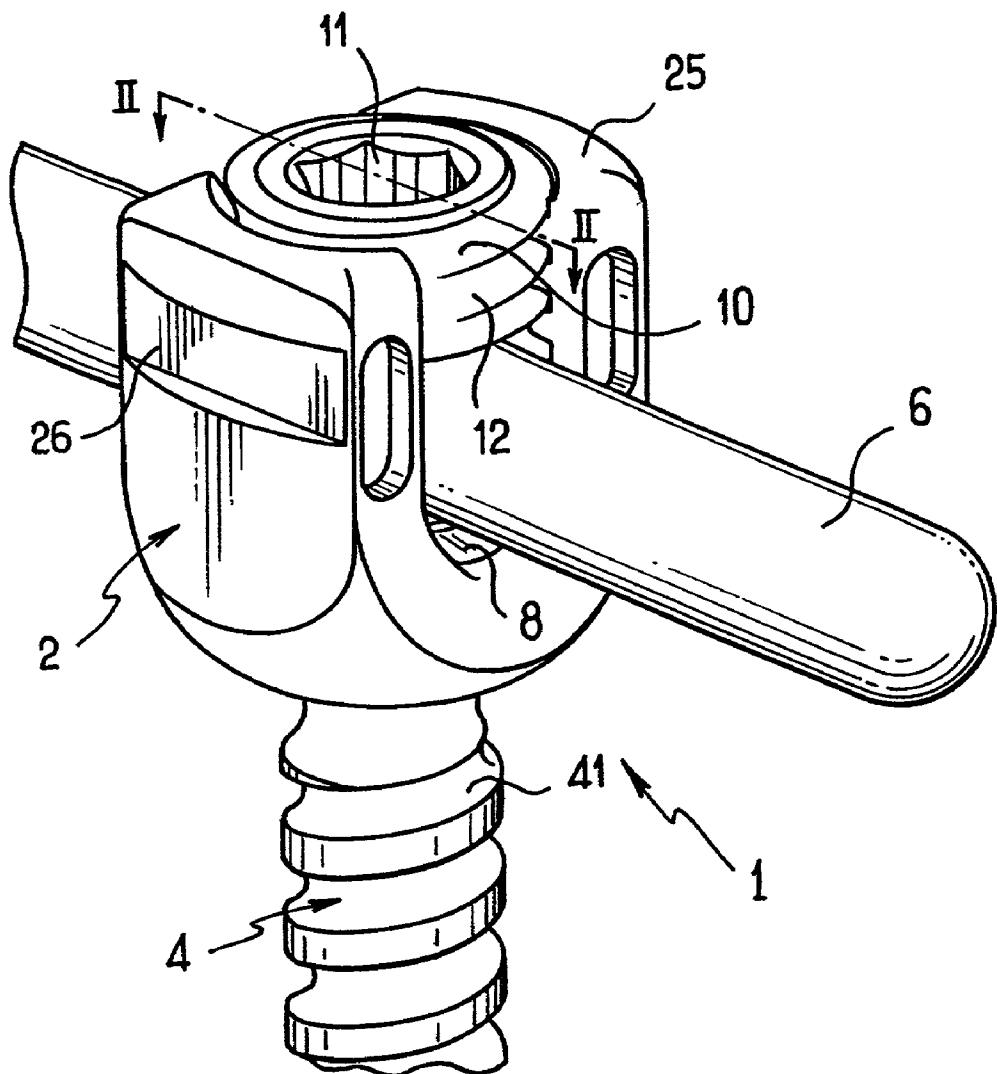
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The spinal osteosynthesis assembly (1) comprises a connector (2), bone anchoring means (4) capable of being received in the connector, a connecting member (6) capable of being received in the connector, and a ring (8) capable of coming into contact with the anchoring means, the connecting member being able to come to bear simultaneously against the ring and the anchoring means when the ring and the anchoring means are fitted in the connector.

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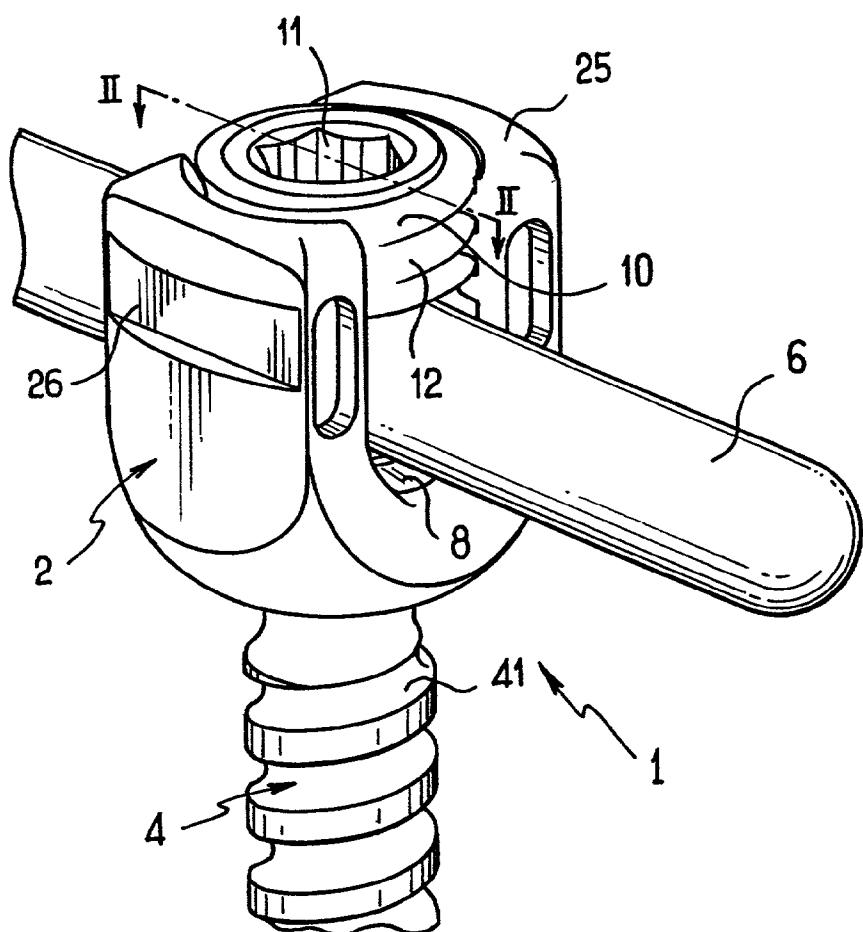
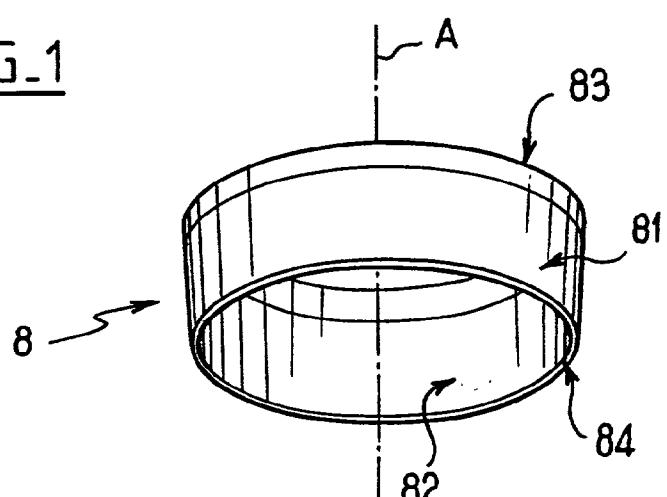


FIG. 1



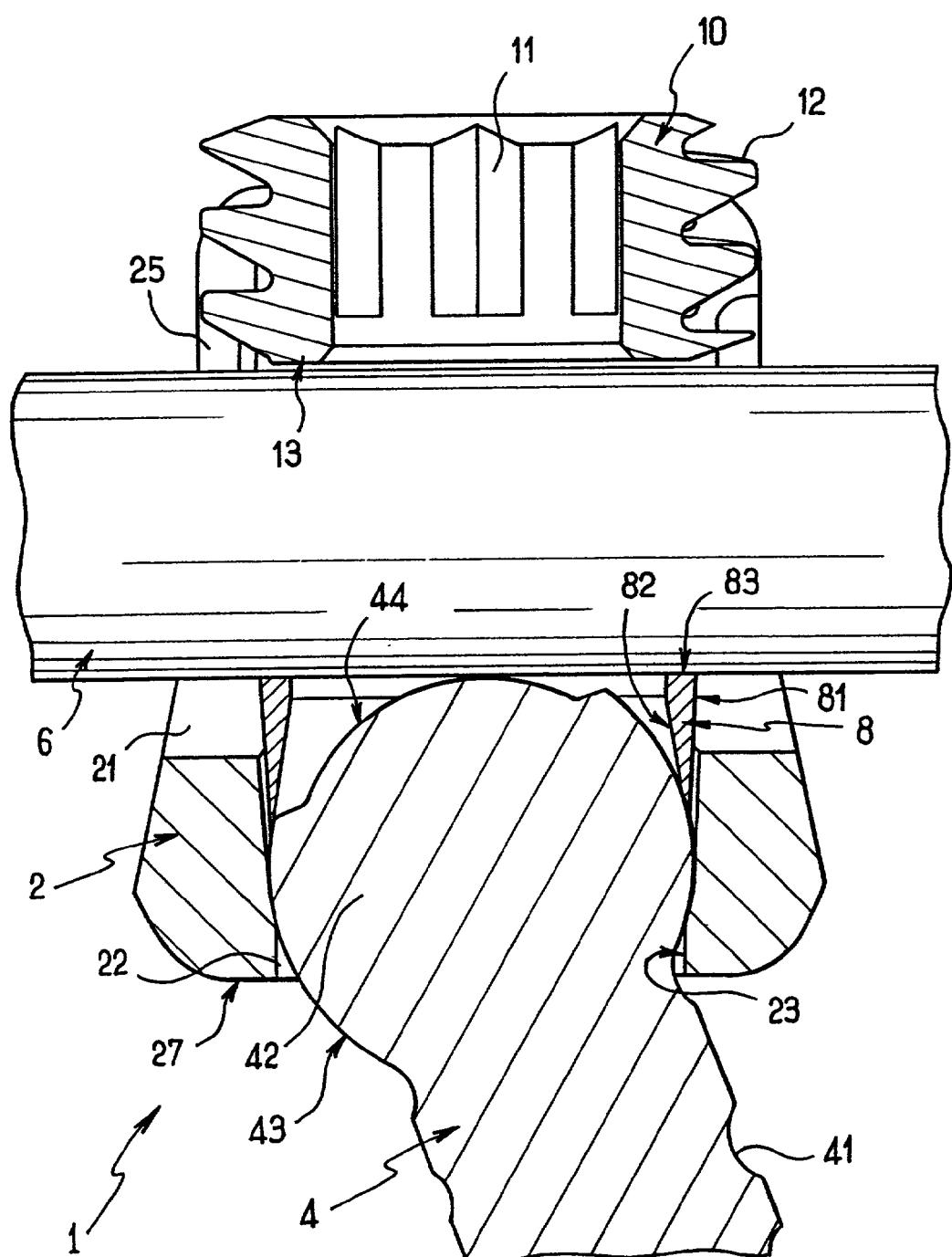
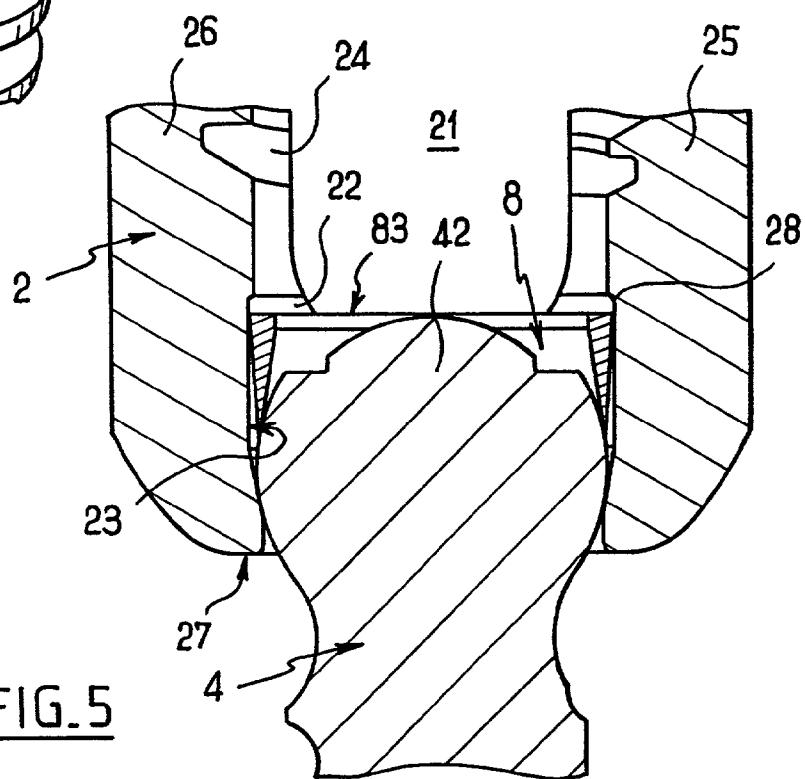
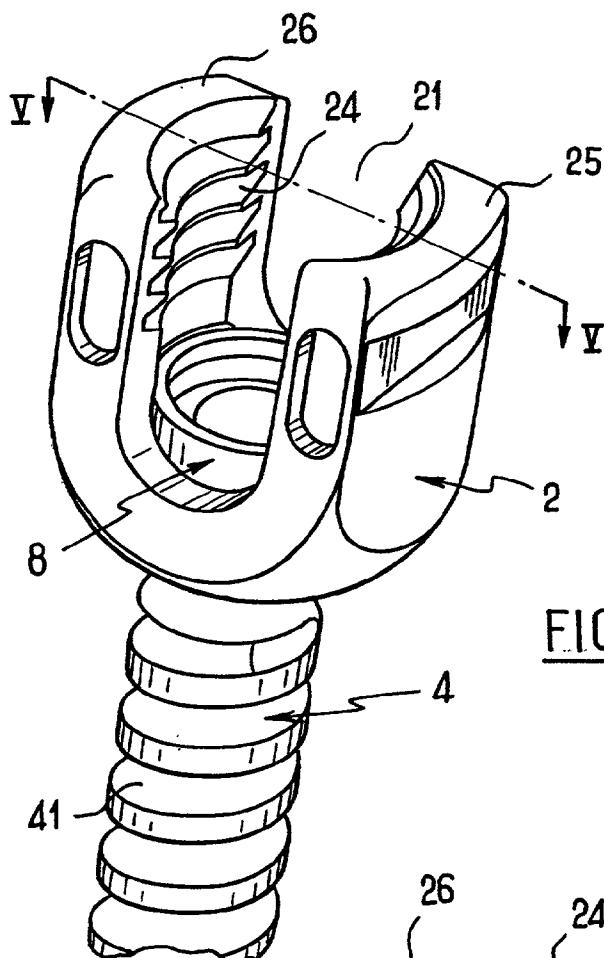


FIG. 2



ANCHORING MEMBER WITH SAFETY RING

[0001] The invention relates to osteosynthesis systems particularly for surgery on the spinal column.

[0002] Document WO 98/12 976 discloses a spinal osteosynthesis system comprising an anchoring member of the polyaxial screw type which is immobilized in position by the link rod bearing against a crown, the rounded lower surface of which bears in a complementary manner on the spherical head of the bone screw lodged in the bottom of a housing made in a connector. Such a system involves a very high bearing force between the rod and the crown in order that the pressure per unit area between the crown and the screw head is high enough to prevent any movement of one with respect to the other, which movement would have the effect of creating instability that is detrimental to the desired osteosynthesis.

[0003] One object of the invention is to provide a position-locking device which is more reliable for the same clamping force.

[0004] To do that, the invention provides a spinal osteosynthesis assembly comprising a connector, bone anchoring means capable of being received in the connector, a connecting member capable of being received in the connector, and a ring capable of coming into contact with the head, the connecting member being able to come to bear simultaneously against the ring and the head when the ring and the anchoring means are fitted in the connector.

[0005] Thus, when locking the osteosynthesis system, the bearing of the connecting member on the ring forces the latter to come to bear against the anchoring means to immobilize the anchoring means in position within the connector, and the simultaneous bearing of the connecting member on the anchoring means enhances the previous immobilization, making it more secure while at the same time maintaining the same clamping force for locking.

[0006] Advantageously, the ring has at least one conical face.

[0007] Advantageously, the ring has a face able to come into contact with the anchoring means.

[0008] Advantageously, the ring has a face able to come into contact with a wall of the connector.

[0009] Advantageously, the faces are coaxial.

[0010] Advantageously, the ring has a flat upper edge perpendicular to an axis of the ring and able to come into contact with the connecting member.

[0011] Advantageously, the ring has a flat lower edge perpendicular to an axis of the ring.

[0012] Advantageously, the ring is able to extend between the wall and the anchoring means when the connecting member bears as mentioned.

[0013] Advantageously, the ring is deformed when the connecting member bears as mentioned, with reference to the shape that the ring had before fitting.

[0014] Advantageously, the ring has a wall thickness which varies according to a height.

[0015] Thus, the ring has a cross section in the shape of a wedge which, when the system is locked, simply wedges

between the wall of the connector and the anchoring means and this, in a simple way, will further enhance the positional immobilization.

[0016] Advantageously, the ring comprises a slot.

[0017] Advantageously, the slot is arranged in such a way that the ring forms a non-closed annulus.

[0018] Advantageously, the ring comprises a number of slots distributed uniformly about a circumference of the ring.

[0019] Advantageously, the anchoring means comprise a head having a roughly spherical face.

[0020] Advantageously, the head has a first spherical face and a second spherical face which have the same center and significantly different diameters.

[0021] Advantageously, the anchoring means form a polyaxial screw.

[0022] Advantageously, the assembly comprises a locking member able to come to bear against the connecting member.

[0023] Also provided according to the invention is an osteosynthesis system comprising an assembly exhibiting at least one of the abovementioned features.

[0024] Other features and advantages of the invention will become apparent during the following description of a preferred embodiment. In the appended drawings:

[0025] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the invention;

[0026] FIG. 2 is a view in section on II-II of the embodiment of FIG. 1;

[0027] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the ring of the preferred embodiment;

[0028] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the embodiment of FIG. 1 prior to the fitting of the connecting member; and

[0029] FIG. 5 is a view in section on V-V of the embodiment of FIG. 4.

[0030] A preferred embodiment will be described with reference to the various FIGS. 1 to 5. The assembly for osteosynthesis of the spinal column 1 here comprises a connector 2, a connecting member 6 and anchoring means 4. Here, the connecting member 6 is an osteosynthesis rod and the anchoring means 4 are formed by a pedicle screw. The assembly 1 also comprises a ring 8 and a locking member 10 capable of locking the assembly 1 in position.

[0031] The connector 2 comprises a U-shaped opening 21 forming the upper part of the connector 2. This U-shaped opening 21 is delimited by two branches 25 and 26 which extend roughly parallel with respect to each other. The internal faces of the branches 25 and 26 which extend facing each other comprise a screw thread 24. Furthermore, the connector 2 in its lower part comprises an internal housing 22 having a wall 23. The upper part of the internal housing 22 opens into the bottom of the U-shaped opening 21 and its lower part opens opposite it onto a lower face 27 of the connector 2. On the same side as the lower face 27, the wall

23 has a conical section designed so that the opening at the lower face **27** is smaller than the opening at the bottom of the U-shaped opening **21**.

[0032] The locking member **10** comprises operating means **11** which here are in the form of a through-orifice **11** with a hexagonal socket. This hexagonal socket is designed to accommodate a hexagonal bit fitted to a screwdriver for operating it. Furthermore, the locking member **10** comprises, on its external side wall, a screw thread **12** that complements the screw thread **24** of the connector **2** between the branches **25** and **26** of which it is able to be received.

[0033] The anchoring means **4** are here in the form of a pedicle screw comprising an anchoring part **41** exhibiting a bone thread, surmounted by a head **42** which here is roughly spherical. The head **42** has a first spherical surface **43** and, forming the top, a second spherical surface **44**, the diameter of which is smaller than the diameter of the spherical surface **43** but has the same center thereas.

[0034] Similar osteosynthesis systems can be found in document EP-0 613 664.

[0035] The ring **8** is of annular shape and has a first face **82** delimiting the internal wall of the ring, a second face **81** delimiting the external wall of the ring and upper **83** and lower **84** edges perpendicular to the geometric axis of revolution A of the ring **8**. The faces **81** and **82** are coaxial and preferably of conical shape. Their respective generators are not mutually parallel. Thus, the faces are arranged one with respect to the other in such a way that the thickness of the ring **2** at the upper edge **83** is greater than the thickness of the ring **8** at the lower edge **84**. The cross section of the ring thus has a wedge shape, giving the ring **8** a tapered shape. However, one of the generators of the faces **81** and **82** may be roughly parallel to the axis of revolution A.

[0036] Prior to use by a surgeon, the connector **2**, the anchoring means **4** and the ring **8** are fitted together. The head **42** of the anchoring means is inserted into the internal housing **22** of the connector **2**. The ring **8** is then itself inserted into the internal housing **22** of the connector **2**. Thus, the head **42** of the anchoring means **4** finds itself held captive in the internal housing **22** against exiting upward by the presence, inside the internal housing **22**, of the ring **8**, which is itself held captive, as will be seen later on. The head **42** is retained against exiting downward by the presence of the conical section of the wall **23** of the internal housing **22**, which has an opening at the lower face **27** of the connector **2**, the dimensions of which are smaller than the diameter of the surface **43** of the head **42**. In addition, the ring **8** is held captive by retaining means **28** present within the internal housing **22**. Here, the retaining means **28** stem from the difference in size between the internal housing **22** and the U-shaped opening **21**, this difference forming a rim against which the upper edge **83** of the ring **8** abuts from below. This assembly is illustrated in FIGS. 4 and 5.

[0037] In use during a surgical operation, the surgeon fits an assembly as described above into the pedicle. He then fits the connecting member **6**, inserting it into the U-shaped opening **21** of the connector **2**. He then fits the locking member **10** between the branches **25** and **26**, engaging the screw thread **12** of the locking member **10** with the complementary screw thread **24** of the connector **2**. Using the

hexagonal socket **11**, he drives the locking member **10** so that the underside **13** of the locking member **10** comes into contact with the connecting member **6**.

[0038] By continuing to screw the locking member **10** between the branches **25** and **26**, the surgeon will exert a force via the locking member **10** on the connecting member **6**, and this will push the connecting member **6** until the latter comes to bear against the upper edge **83** of the ring **8**.

[0039] As locking continues, the ring **8** then slips along the wall **23** of the internal housing **22** until the face **82** of the ring **8** comes into contact with the surface **43** of the head **42** of the anchoring means **4**. The surface **43** is itself in contact with the conical section of the wall **23** of the internal housing **22** of the connector **2**. The system therefore finds itself in a situation as illustrated in FIG. 2.

[0040] During final locking, which will allow the assembly to be immobilized in position, the clamping force imparted by the surgeon via the locking member **10** will allow the ring **8** to be made to slide on the head **42**. For that, the face **82** will slide on the surface **43**, forcing the ring **8** to open up by deformation until the face **81** of the ring **8** comes into contact over all or part of its surface with the wall **23** of the internal housing **22** of the connector **2**. At that moment, the connecting member **6** comes to bear at a point on the spherical surface **44**. Thus, the head **42** is immobilized in position, on the one hand, by the ring **8** and, on the other hand, by the connecting member **6** directly. There is thus what is known as three-point contact, two of the points being diametrically opposed points of contact of the edge **83** of the ring **8** with the connecting member **6** and one additional point where the connecting member **6** contacts the surface **44** of the head **42** of the anchoring means **4**.

[0041] Of course, numerous modifications could be made to the invention without departing from its scope.

[0042] For example, the ring **8** could have at least one slot.

[0043] The slot could be arranged in such a way that the ring forms a non-closed annulus.

[0044] The tapered shape due to the wedge shape of the cross section of the ring, instead of being continuous over its entire circumference, could consist of a number of sectors separated by slots to form an "umbrella" structure.

[0045] These various modifications allow easier deformation of the ring **8**. This has the effect of making the ring **8** easier to introduce into the internal housing **22** of the connector **2**, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of making the final locking during use in a surgical operation easier.

1. Spinal osteosynthesis assembly (1) comprising a connector (2), bone anchoring means (4) capable of being received in the connector, a connecting member (6) capable of being received in the connector, and a ring (8) capable of coming into contact with the anchoring means, characterized in that it is arranged in such a way that the connecting member is able to come to bear simultaneously against the ring and the anchoring means when the ring and the anchoring means are fitted in the connector.

2. Assembly according to claim 1, characterized in that the ring has at least one conical face (81, 82).

3. Assembly according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the ring has a face (82) able to come into contact with the anchoring means.

4. Assembly according to one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the ring has a face (81) able to come into contact with a wall (23) of the connector.

5. Assembly according to claims 3 and 4, characterized in that the faces (81, 82) are coaxial.

6. Assembly according to one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the ring has a flat upper edge (83) perpendicular to an axis (A) of the ring and able to come into contact with the connecting member.

7. Assembly according to one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that the ring has a flat lower edge (84) perpendicular to an axis (A) of the ring.

8. Assembly according to one of claims 1 to 7, characterized in that it is arranged in such a way that the ring is able to extend between the wall (23) and the anchoring means when the connecting member bears as mentioned.

9. Assembly according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it is arranged in such a way that the ring is deformed when the connecting member bears as mentioned, with reference to the shape that the ring had before fitting.

10. Assembly according to one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the ring has a wall thickness which varies according to a height.

11. Assembly according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the ring comprises a slot.

12. Assembly according to claim 11, characterized in that the slot is arranged in such a way that the ring forms a non-closed annulus.

13. Assembly according to claim 11, characterized in that the ring comprises a number of slots distributed uniformly about a circumference of the ring.

14. Assembly according to one of claims 1 to 13, characterized in that the anchoring means comprise a head (42) having a roughly spherical face (43, 44).

15. Assembly according to claim 14, characterized in that the head has a first spherical face (43) and a second spherical face (44) which have the same center and significantly different diameters.

16. Assembly according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the anchoring means form a polyaxial screw.

17. Assembly according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it further comprises a locking member (10) able to come to bear against the connecting member.

18. Osteosynthesis system characterized in that it comprises an assembly according to one of claims 1 to 16.

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